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Perry Preschool Project, Ypsilanti, Michigan; One of a Series of Successful Compensatory Education Programs. It Works: Preschool Program in Compensatory Education.

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The Perry Preschool Project assessed longitudinal effects of a 2-year program consisting of a daily 3-hour cognitively oriented nursery, a weekly 90-minute home visit, and less frequent group meetings of the pupils' parents. Subjects consisted of 3- and 4-year-old Negro disadvantaged and functionally retarded children, whose pretest scores on the Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale were not above 85. The program operated from September 1962 until June 1966. About 24 children took part each year. Upon entering, the children were pretested on the Stanford-Binet, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, and the Leiter International Performance Scale. These and other tests were used later in the program. Few significant differences between experimentals and controls were noted on the pretests. The California Achievement Tests in reading, language, and mathematics were given at the end of the first grade and again at the end of the second grade. The results showed significant gains for the experimentals over the controls. (JS)

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PERRY PRESCHOOL PROJECT
Ypsilanti, Michigan

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IT WORKS

PERRY PRESCHOOL PROJECT
YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN

One of a Series of

Successful Compensatory Education Programs

U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Robert H. Finch, Secretary

Office of Education
Peter P. Muirhead, Acting Commissioner

FOREWORD

This project report is part of an independent study of selected exemplary programs for the education of disadvantaged children completed by the American Institutes for Research in the Behavioral Sciences, Palo Alto, Calif., under contract with the U.S. Office of Education.

The researchers report this project significantly improved the educational attainment of the disadvantaged children involved. Other communities, in reviewing the educational needs of the disadvantaged youngsters they serve, may wish to use this project as a model - adapting it to their specific requirements and resources.

Division of Compensatory Education
Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education

THE PERRY PRESCHOOL PROJECT

IN YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN

Introduction

The Perry Preschool Project was aimed at assessing the longitudinal effects of a 2-year program consisting of a daily 3-hour cognitively oriented nursery, a weekly 90-minute home visit, and less frequent group meetings of the pupils' parents.

The students were 3- and 4-year old Negro disadvantaged and functionally retarded children, whose pretest scores on the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale were not above 85.0.

The program described here operated from September 1962 until June 1966. Approximately 24 children participated in the preschool annually. Half of these were 3 years of age, the other half were 4-year olds. Each of these age groups was designated as a "Wave"; consequently, two different "Waves" participated each year.

For each group or "Wave" of children entering the experiment, the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, the Leiter International Performance Scale, and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test were used at the start of the experiment to test the intellectual ability of the children. Few significant differences between the experimentals and the controls were noted at this time. These and other tests were also used to measure intellectual ability later in the program. The benefits claimed for the program are those measured by the California Achievement Test in reading, language, and mathematics. These tests were given at the end of first grade and again at the end of second grade. The results showed significant gains for the experimentals over the controls.

Personnel

The following personnel were instrumental in the planning, execution, and evaluation of the program.

A. Director. (Part-time; experience in experimental preschool; trained in cognitive curriculum.)

B. Curriculum Supervisor. (Full-time; experience in experimental preschools; trained in cognitive curriculum.)

C. Program Supervisor. (Full-time; experience in experimental preschools; trained in cognitive curriculum.)

D. Teachers. (Four each year; full-time; mean age 32; certificated in elementary education, speech correction and/or mental retardation; mean experience 10 years; received preservice training.)

They taught in the 3-hour morning preschool; visited one home each afternoon during the week to tutor one child and involve the mothers in the teaching activities; organized parent meetings.

Methodology: General

From its inception the Perry Preschool was a school-organized, district-sponsored effort to effect a positive change in the behaviors of culturally deprived children which would eventually lead to academic success and social adjustment in the elementary grades.

The children were selected on the following criteria: residence in a home with a low socio-economic status as determined by an adaptation of the Deutsch Cultural Deprivation Index; age three or four; and functionally retarded as measured by the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale. The total number of children meeting these criteria for each year of the study were then divided into two matched groups on the basis of mean IQ, mean C.D. rating, percent of boys and girls, percent of 3- and 4-year old children, and percent of working mothers. One group was designated the experimental group, the other the control group.

The experimental group attended the morning program 5 days a week; each child also received a 90-minute afternoon home-based visit once a week from one of his four teachers. Contact with the control group was limited to the collection of data.

The various groups of children who participated in the program were designated as "Waves." Wave 0 started preschool in 1962 and consisted of 4-year olds who at this writing have spent a year each in the nursery, kindergarten and first through fourth grades. Wave 1 also began in 1962, but consisted of 3-year olds who spent 2 years in the nursery and 1 year each in grades kindergarten through third. All subsequent waves had 2 years of nursery prior to entering elementary school. The last wave, Wave 4, began nursery school in the fall of 1965.

A. Instructional Program from 1962-65.

Waves 0, 1, 2, and 3 were exposed to an instructional method that has been described as "verbal bombardment." In this method the teacher maintained a steady stream of questions and comments to draw the child's attention to specific aspects of his environment. It was used when rewarding him and disciplining him, as well as when instructing him in academic pursuits. The complexity of the language increased as the child's verbal ability developed.

The cognitive lessons used in the academic curriculum attempted to structure learning by requiring the teachers to select certain thematic units for study, determine the objectives for the units, and then sequence the learning tasks needed to accomplish these objectives. Emphasis was placed on developing an intensive language environment, thinking skills, impulse control and task orientation.

The four preschool teachers jointly operated the morning program which was divided into two main instructional periods separated by a refreshment period.

The "early morning" instructional period was an hour in duration. It took place in the largest of the school's three rooms. Each teacher was stationed in one of the four "area teaching" divisions of the classroom: arts and crafts, housekeeping, pre-academic, block activities. During this period the children were free to select any one of the four activity centers. The child could participate or observe as long as he chose and move from one area to another. The teacher's lesson plans were structured to include a variety of activities which could easily be adapted to the individual children participating in her learning center.

The thematic units designed for use in these area teaching centers were systematically developed to emphasize the following cognitive processes: sensory perception; language development; memorization; concept development. (A description of specific lessons appears in the following section.)

The "late morning" period was more highly structured than the earlier period. The children were divided into two homogeneous groups, approximately 12 students per group, based on "cognitive ability." Two teachers worked with each of these groups, making the pupil:teacher ratio 6:1. The groups met for approximately 20 minutes in two small separate classrooms adjacent to the larger room used for the early morning activities. Instructional units were sequentially introduced by the two teachers, and the individual lessons within a unit were

designed to teach a particular skill or concept which was felt to constitute the foundation for future learning and which was observed to be missing from the children's repertoire of behavior.

The two groups were programmed separately. The more advanced group undertook relatively long units involving language usage, refined auditory discrimination, and complex dramatic play. The less advanced group, composed mainly of the 3-year olds, spent time in basic skill training and simple pre-math concepts (e.g., geometric forms). (Again, specific descriptions of the activities appear in the next section.)

Field trips were taken to extend the learning activities of the area and group teaching experiences. In general, field trips were scheduled sequentially with emphasis on a single aspect. For example, a trip to a farm to see apple trees was followed by trips to a cider mill and to a grocery store to purchase cider and other apple products. Finally a cooking experience, such as the preparation of apple sauce, took place in the homemaking area.

These "real life" experiences were used by the teachers to develop language concepts, to suggest parallels between reality and representation in books, to foster occupational role identifications, to raise aspiration levels, and to develop appropriate social behaviors.

The purposes of the afternoon, home-based program, were: to involve the mother in the education of her child; to demonstrate the process of teaching; and, to tutor the child on a one-to-one basis. The home visits also offered an opportunity for the teacher to become more cognizant of the child's deficits, thereby enabling her to work more effectively with each child in the classroom.

Two types of afternoon sessions were conducted: cognitive skill training and field trips. The cognitive skills stressed in the afternoon sessions were: visual training (e.g., identifying objects, colors, forms, letters); fine-motor coordination necessary for writing (e.g., tracing dotted lines); auditory discrimination essential in learning to read (e.g., listening to records, responding to instructions, imitating and classifying sounds); pre-math training (e.g., counting silverware); and general science training (e.g., planting seeds, making Jell-O). The area of emphasis and the activities were varied to suit the individual child and home situation.

Individual field trips were extensions of the constant effort to reinforce concepts taught in the morning program. If the child appeared

not to have grasped the significance of a group field trip, the teacher would return with the child to the site of the former visit to permit closer observation of the situation. The mother was always offered the opportunity to join them on these trips.

Monthly parent meetings held at the school on a community center offered the mothers and fathers an opportunity to exchange views about the program. The more interested parents did the recruiting along with the staff; in addition, they prepared the refreshments and assumed responsibility for planning the topics for discussion. The men and women met in separate groups, but whenever possible their programs were paralleled to facilitate discussions at home. A variety of programs was offered in an attempt to determine which types were more effective in stimulating interest. The mothers' meetings were chaired by the preschool teachers; the fathers; by a male social worker in the school system. There were no outside experts. Refreshments were available at no expense to the parents.

B. Instructional Program for 1965-66

Wave 4 was exposed to an instructional program which was much more highly structured than that of the previous years (1962-65). The new curriculum was influenced by the developmental theory of Piaget, and was meant to follow the sequence of growth stages he postulates. The preschool was to facilitate the transition from sensory-motor to conceptual intelligence, through an instructional program which promoted an understanding of symbolization and elementary types of relationships. Symbolization helps the child to move from concrete, sensory-motor intelligence to representational intelligence; elementary relationships include those between things and events.

The project staff made the following distinctions between a traditional nursery school and the Perry Preschool: (Weikart, 1967)

1. The materials and activities used were basically the same as in a traditional nursery school, but they were used in different ways and for different purposes.

2. The teaching goals of the preschool for disadvantaged children were not primarily to enrich and extend children's experience, but to enable them to acquire the basic cognitive skills that they had never developed.

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3. Since the preschool had disadvantaged children for a very limited amount of time each day, and so much learning had to be done, every item in the room and every activity during the day was especially selected for its contribution to the learning process.

4. Since time was limited and the cognitive deficits were numerous, careful programming was essential so as not to skip important intermediate steps.

The terminal objective for the preschool program 1965-66 was essentially the same as that for the previous years: to foster a positive change in intellectual growth which would lead to academic success and social adjustment in the elementary grades. However, the interim objectives were explicitly defined in behavioral terms and set forth as follows (Weikart, 1967):

Cognitive Objectives

1. To understand and respond to temporal relations

   a. Beginning and end
   b. Ordering of events (before, after, first, if - then)
   c. Time periods containing different lengths of time (day, week)

2. To understand and respond to spatial relations

   a. Prepositions of position (on, under)
   b. Prepositions of direction (toward, from)
   c. Prepositions of distance (near)

   These goals are experienced in relation to the self and to objects.

3. To understand and use seriation

   a. Sizes to four (big, little)
   b. Quantities to four (many, few)
   c. Qualities to three (hard, soft)

4. To understand and use classification

   a. Conceptual (gross discriminations)
   b. Descriptive (size, shape, color)
   c. Relational (function)

Developmental Objectives

1. To develop levels of symbolization

    a. Real objects -- identifying and naming real objects (duck)
    b. Index

        1. Marks causally related to objects (foot prints)
        2. Object permanency
        3. Object constancy

    c. Representation

        1. Pictures (realistic--abstract) (recognize picture of a duck)
        2. Clay models -- drawings
        3. Motor encoding (squatting walk like a duck)

    d. Sign -- words (recognizing the word duck)

2. Operational levels

    a. Motor

        1. Child uses own body to experience concepts.
        2. Child operates on objects.
        3. Child uses objects to operate on other objects.

    b. Verbal

        1. Teacher provides verbal stimulus.
        2. Child relates what he is going to do before he does it.
        3. Child verbalizes while performing action.
        4. Child interprets what he has done after he has done it.
        5. Child can verbally evaluate his own work from memory.

3. Impulse control

    a. To help child develop longer attention span
    b. To assist child in planning and carrying out self-selected activities

Mental Health Objectives

1. Body image -- internal feelings about self
2. External -- feelings about others

Group Process (Socialization) Objectives

1. To help the child develop an awareness of group functioning:

    a. An understanding of his rights in and contributions to the group
    b. An understanding of the rights and contributions of other members of the group (adults and peers).

The daily routine for the preschool was similar for all 6 years of the program with the exception of the four new activities checked in the sample schedule outlined below.

	8:45 - 9:00	Arrival
✓	9:00 - 9:15	Planning meeting
	9:15 - 9:45	Area teaching
✓	9:45 - 10:00	Evaluation
	10:00 - 10:15	Clean-up
	10:15 - 10:25	Juice time
	10:25 - 10:45	Small group teaching
✓	10:45 - 11:00	Activity time
✓	11:00 - 11:15	Circle time
	11:15	Dismissal

The four new time blocks were added to further increase the opportunity for verbal interaction among the teachers and students and to reinforce the cognitive lessons presented during area and small group teaching. The following paragraphs describe more explicitly the types of activities pursued during each block of time (Weikart, 1967):

Arrival

Children hung up own coats and immediately went to area designated for planning time (temporal relations).

Planning

The school routine was reinforced during this period of time (temporal relations). In addition, the teachers and group planned activities which would take place during work time (Area teaching).

Area teachin.

The children worked in their chosen area for a reasonable length of time (temporal relations). During this period, the teachers were constantly interacting with the children to attain certain predetermined goals which dealt with temporal or spatial relationships, seriation, or classification. Examples of each area include:

1. temporal -- started and finished an art activity
2. spatial -- motor body movement, i.e., up-down
3. seriation -- used large hollow blocks for making a big house and a little house
4. classification -- after making a house from the blocks, teacher and child determined items which were needed in the house; i.e., telephone, chairs.

Evaluation

During this period of time, the children were encouraged to discuss the activities in which they were involved during work time. They were also encouraged to evaluate themselves in relation to whether they felt that they worked well or could have worked better (body concept).

Clean-up

This period was used to reinforce all predetermined goals in the area of temporal relations, spatial relations, seriation, and/or classification; examples include:

1. temporal - signal designating the end of clean-up time
2. spatial - The car goes <u>on</u> this shelf.
3. serialization - The big blocks go here; the little blocks go there
4. classification - cabinet contains all blocks; another contains all cars; another contains all the puzzles, etc.

Juice time

This period used for serving refreshments also afforded an opportunity for informal language development. The teachers would label objects (e.g., cup, juice), name colors, name children and encourage the children to use certain language patterns associated with the social graces.

Small group time

This time was used for directed teaching of small groups. Each teacher preplanned for her group. Again the four areas (temporal, spatial, seriation and classification) were taught. Activities during this time included one of the following:

1. temporal - who was ready first, second, last
2. spatial - Everybody put your hands under the table, on the table, over the table.
3. serialization - use of big - little cookies, cups, etc.
4. classification - sorting pictures of animals and pictures of items which are not animals into two groups

Activity time

The specific activity was planned for either indoors or outdoors. A typical activity involved the use of spatial concepts such as: sliding "up and down" the slide, "under" the ladder, etc.

Rhythms were also used during this time. A temporal concept which might have been taught is: play your instruments "at the same time, now."

Circle time

This part of the day was used for reviewing the morning's activities and for recalling the routine of the day (temporal relations). In addition, the teacher selected a book which would reinforce a particular concept which was taught, e.g., book on animals to reinforce classification.

Dismissal

The children were usually dismissed in a particular manner such as: walk like a duck, etc. While the children were putting on their coats, body image and relational classification were sometimes reinforced, e.g., hat on your head, glove on your hand, etc.

The afternoon home-based program and weekly parent meetings were conducted in the same manner as they had been in previous years.

Methodology: Specific

The descriptions included in this section are drawn from activities which took place during a typical day at the Perry Preschool. Examples A and B are representative of the instructional program from 1962-65; example C is representative of the program as it existed from 1965-66.

A. Area Teaching

One 2-week unit held in the housekeeping corner focused on the theme of "milk and milk products". The goals of the unit were defined, but not the goals of individual lessons (Weikart, 1967).

Purposes:

1. To teach about milk -- where it comes from, various milk products, and why it is important.
2. To encourage careful observation of different states (liquid, powder, cheeses, whipped cream, pudding consistency, etc.).
3. To feel, smell, taste, and look.

Activities:

1. Have whole milk, powdered milk, and evaporated milk, and see, taste, smell, feel, and talk about differences. Learn the words "powder" and "liquid". Make milk with powder and then with evaporated milk.
2. Make milk shakes.
3. Make whipped cream.
4. Make hot milk and honey.
5. Buy milk products and eat (cheese, sour cream, ice cream, etc.)
6. Put up and talk about pictures of many baby animals drinking milk. Talk about why milk is important.
7. Cut out pictures of milk products from magazines and paste. Learn names.
8. Take a trip to the dairy.
9. Dramatic play showing a large picture of a cow.

10. Bring in a coconut, taste its "milk", compare it with cow's milk.
11. Make vanilla pudding with milk. Have children experiment with making pudding thick or thin.

B. Small-Group Teaching

One unit which introduced geometric shapes to the younger children was divided into several lessons. The goals of the unit and the goals of each lesson were defined (Weikart, 1967).

Unit:

Geometric Forms No. 3 (for 3-year-olds)

Purpose:

To continue teaching geometric shapes
To introduce the words "in" and "out"

Activity:

Each child was given a box (gift box) containing cardboard squares, circles, and triangles. The teacher held up a shape and the child was to find a shape to match. When the children found a shape, they took it out of their boxes, and laid it in the middle of the table. The game was then reversed. The teacher held up a shape while the children looked for the same shape to put in their boxes.

During the two most recent years of the program (1965-67) the teaching staff formulated objectives for the week, the day and the lesson. The goals of each separate activity during a single day represented interim steps toward achieving the terminal objective(s).

C. The following format represents part of a daily lesson plan. It may be noted that each activity in the daily routine was used to reinforce the interim objectives.

Terminal Objective: to increase each child's understanding of spatial relations

Interim Objective: to focus on prepositions concerning position

Level of Symbolization: Object-Index

Procedure: Review and extend previous work in this area

Motor Activities	Verbal Activities
1. Area Teaching - use of doll corner and equipment for emphasizing positions	1. Child verbalizes placement of doll, e.g., "The doll is <u>in</u> the high chair".

Evaluation

A. Measures of Achievement

Three measures of intelligence were used consistently in this program to assess progress: the Stanford-Binet, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT), and the Leiter International Performance Scale. Each was used in the fall of the entering year for each wave, and in the spring of each year prekindergarten through third-grade, again for each wave. Differences favoring the experimental groups in the early years were usually evident from the scores when the means for all five waves were combined, but by second-grade these differences had disappeared. The analysis is tentative because as is shown in Table 1, later waves had not yet reached the grades.

Table 1

STATUS OF WAVES 0 THROUGH 4 IN THE ANALYSIS OF THE PERRY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM, THROUGH SPRING 1967

Wave	1962-63	1963-64	1964-65	1965-66	1966-67
0	PK	K	G1	G2	G3
1		PK	K	G1	G2
2			PK	K	G1
3				PK	K
4					PK

The results of testing the waves with the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities are similar to those for the three intelligence tests.

Academic achievement tests were also used in the evaluation, usually from first grade onwards. The results for all the waves combined, in grades one through three, on the California Achievement Tests, showed that the experimentals significantly outperformed the controls in each grade (at the 5 percent level). Similar results were obtained from use of the Gates Reading Tests. Again, the analysis is tentative because later waves had not reached the grades.

Tables 2 and 3 contain the means for the three intelligence tests and the California Achievement Test battery, respectively, obtained from the five waves combined.

Table 2

STANFORD-BINET, PPVT, AND LEITER IQ SCORES FOR WAVES 0 THROUGH 4 IN THE PERRY PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAM, PREKINDERGARTEN THROUGH THIRD GRADE

	Fall Entering Year	Spring Entering Year	Spring Second Year	Spring Kinder-garten	Spring First Grade	Spring Second Grade	Spring Third Grade
Stanford-Binet							
Experimental	79.6	95.9	94.7	90.1	91.5	87.3	89.2
Control	78.5	83.3	83.5	84.9	83.2	96.1	88.3
PPVT							
Experimental	67.1	74.5	81.4	78.3	83.5	81.8	77.2
Control	62.2	63.7	62.9	73.2	77.9	81.0	80.5
Leiter							
Experimental	70.1	97.6	89.7	85.1	86.6	87.9	90.4
Control	59.0	72.0	77.9	81.9	85.8	87.3	85.3

Table 3

CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST BATTERY SCORES FOR
WAVES 0 THROUGH 3 IN THE PERRY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM,
FIRST THROUGH THIRD GRADE

	Spring First Grade	Spring Second Grade	Spring Third Grade
California Achievement Test Battery			
Experimental	91.5	143.2	191.2
Control	70.7	115.3	114.9

Certain factors on the Ypsilanti Rating Scale also referred to academic achievement. This scale, developed for the program, was used each spring for kindergarten through third grade in Waves 0 through 4. In almost all instances ratings on the scale for experimentals were higher than for controls.

B. Other Evaluation Indices

Non-academic achievement factors on the Ypsilanti Rating Scale again yielded ratings showing the experimentals higher than the controls. A pupil behavior inventory was used, covering classroom conduct, academic motivation and performance, socio-emotional state, teacher dependence and personal behavior. Again, with few exceptions, experimental groups gained higher ratings than controls.

C. Modifications and Suggestions

No major modifications are being made to the basic program, but the experimental design has been changed radically. Now a three-way comparison study is being conducted, to compare Wave 5 with a conventional preschool group, and also with a group being instructed according to the pattern of the Academic Preschool of Champaign, Illinois (the Bereiter-Engelmann Project).

Budget (annual)

1	Director	Half time
1	Curriculum supervisor	Full-time
1	Program Supervisor	Full-time
4	Teachers	Full-time
	Rental, Utilities, Custodial	$4,000
	Travel (Professional)	$500
	Transportation	$8,000
	Books and Materials	$8 per child
	Other	$500

The total cost of the program during the most recent year (1966-67) for 48 children was approximately $51,000

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For More Information

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